1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

Theodorina, the wife of Theodoros, is criticized because of 598
her lack of physical robustness. About three years ago she lost 579
a baby girl. She was prostrate with grief and never fully re- 159
covered. She has been to a number of different doctors who 165
have agreed that she is suffering from 'weakness' but have
variously diagnosed this as due to infected tonsils, bad heart,
and anaemia. She has had her tonsils and adenoids removed 257
and a number of courses of injections; this treatment has cost a
considerable sum of money and has produced no visible im-
provement. Demetrina, the wife of the second brother, is par-
ticularly scornful of Theodorina. 'Theodorina is down on the
ground (κατὰ γῆς) again', she complains, and goes on to explain
that she is leaving her children in the ditch to fend for them-
selves just because of an idea in her head. This refers to her
grief for her little girl. It is right to grieve, but not to this extent
where she is unable to care properly for her sons and daughters
for whose existence she ought to thank God. No doubt what
really annoys Demetrina and the other women is the money
wasted on medicines, and the extra work which they have to do
when Theodorina periodically says she is too sick to go about
her tasks.

Demetrina, herself, is disliked by all the other wives and her
mother-in-law because of her sharp tongue and her dogmatic
holier-than-thou attitude. Her own family of origin is on the 602
worst of terms with her husband's brothers and she is suspected,
not without reason, of passing on information about the conduct
of affairs in the extended family into which she has married.
She is a storm centre in many quarrels with the other wives on
account of her four-year-old son, an unpleasant and physically
tough blonde-headed bully, who maltreats his young cousins by
hurling stones and hitting them over the head with pieces of
wood. They note that this child resembles his maternal kin.

The third wife, Eleutherina, is a good worker but graceless 596
in body and personality. She suffers from some catarrhal com- 578
plaint which makes her speech almost unintelligible and causes 159
her nostrils to drool with mucus. Behind her back the other 732
wives mock her for these defects and she is conscious of this.
Her small son Alec, who is four years old, suffers from the same
catarrhal complaint, appears to be mentally backward, and is
subject to periodic fits. She is held responsible for the disabilities 558
of the child which affect the prestige of the whole family.

/350 cont./

805 the night the height of the /351/ moon, but chiefly the appearance
821 and position of the stars and constellations on the vault of heaven
[233] fulfill the same function. When, for example, Gemini is found near the zenith, the Sarakatsani send the flocks out to their nocturnal pasture. The same is true of the positions of Mars, the Pleiades, etc.

821 In second place come the meteorological forecasts.
825 What is striking is that the weather predictions are based chiefly
787 on some signs derived from the behavior of the flocks and the wild animals. It would seem that on this point the Sarakatsani trusts the instinct of the animals much more than the phenomena of nature (winds, clouds, color of the sky at twilight, etc.). It is very probable that his attention, always polarized by his principal interest, the livestock, induces him to look at the world largely through it.

Thus, when during a sunny day the sheep, shortly before noon, gather together and sleep in the sun, huddled against each other, it is a sign of bad weather. If, in winter, the sheep browse voraciously, snow can be expected the next day. When the beasts of burden, grazing on the heights, start to come down again, the weather will be bad (rain or storm). The howling of jackals and wolves is a portent of bad weather. When it is fair and the owl settled in a spot usually sheltered from the sun (a gorge, for example), starts to hoot, the weather will change and become bad. On the other hand, if it is raining and the owl chooses a place generally exposed to the sun (a hillside with a southern exposure) to make itself hear, this means that the weather will improve.

759 In the third place, knowledge bearing on therapy should be mentioned.
752 There are among the Sarakatsani specialists who practice orthopedics and kinesitherapy. In cases of fracture, dislocation and sprain, the practitioner uses ligatures or other manipulations that enable the bones
757 or displaced joints to recover. In case of lumbago, the patient must,

/351 cont./

757 in the course of three consecutive mornings at day break, stand in front of the door of the hut, his right hand as high as possible on the door jamb and his left hand as low as possible on the opposite upright. Then he must bend his trunk deeply three times. This exercise must be repeated several times in succession with the hands reversed.

757 /352/ There is another treatment of lumbago: the patient lies
759 flat on his stomach on a "bed," and the healer starts to massage him. After that he takes hold of the patient's right hand and left foot and tries to join them above his back. He repeats the manipulation
[239] with the opposite limbs. These manipulations finished, the healer applies on the painful spot a sort of poultice made from the lungs of a recently killed young goat, cut in pieces, soaked in alcohol, sprinkled with sugar and raised to the normal body temperature.

757 To heal the inflammation of ganglions in the groin, a heated
755 wooden spoon is applied and the operation is repeated several times in succession while exorcisms are pronounced.

752 In case of scorpion bites it is necessary to rub the wound with the
824 milk of the fig tree.

757 Finally, medicinal plants are used to combat fever, a cold, etc.
298 The rest of Sarakatsani therapy deals exclusively with curative
757 magic. But one finds its presence everywhere be it only in the manner
755 of administering treatment by rational means. The examples cited are evidence: the exercise against lumbago is done "at daybreak" and not during the day; the poultice is made with the lungs of kids and not of lambs; the treatment of glands involves exorcisms, etc.

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128 Having presented this date, we shall try to formulate certain ideas about Sarakatsani knowledge.